

The Right Moment

I am so shy that I have been practicing for forty-seven years to say just the right thing to the girl of my dreams.

And tonight in the market I saw her, the heart's desire. Of course there is a difference in our ages by now, but

I imagined that we could still be very happy together. After all, I do not smell or make demands. I would be

content to peer at her through keyholes or, at parties given by her young friends, to stand around with a small

mirror taped to the toe of my shoe. Then after a few years we would learn to love one another and she might

introduce me to a record promoter who would be taken with my mature beauty and captivating hum and could

catapult me to fame. Then she would be glad she married me and I could tangle my hands in her fru-fru hair.

You see, I had it all figured out. So when I spoke to her and she laughed I was more suprised than hurt.

Later, at home, I used the same lines on my gray and
patient
cat: "Hello, toots," I said, "Chicken Inspector No. 23

here. Say, those gams make me go ga-ga, and by the way, how can you make your feet behave when you hear those
tunes,

oh, baby."

The cat purrs and rubs my legs so I go into my tap routine, then do fifteen minutes of Eddie Cantor. Finally we

are both tired so I open a can of tuna and while she eats I have a drink and wonder, vaguely, what went wrong.

ron koertge

